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BERKSHIRE COUNTY BOARDS OF HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Pittsfield, MA February 27, 2020 12:00pm

Update on COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Local Boards of Health (LBOH)

Please note: This is a rapidly evolving situation. Risk of the Coronavirus to Massachusetts residents remains low. Infection numbers are likely to change. BCBOHA will continue to provide updates and coordinate public messaging on the situation on a regular basis.

Situation Report:

Recently, a new strain of coronavirus—2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (COVID-19)—was detected in Wuhan, China. This novel coronavirus causes a respiratory (lung) infection. This new virus is related to, but different from, other coronaviruses that cause the common cold and diseases such as SARS and MERS. Common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, coughing, shortness of breath and in severe cases, pneumonia (fluid in the lungs). Cases range from very mild to severe, with up to 2% of cases currently ending in death.

As of February 27, there has been one confirmed case of novel coronavirus or COVID-19 in Massachusetts and 15 confirmed cases in the United States. In addition, there are three individuals who tested positive after being repatriated to the US from Wuhan, China and 45 cases among those repatriated from the Diamond Princess Cruise Ship. The CDC confirmed a case yesterday in a person from Northern California that has no known travel history or contact with an infected person, indicating the community transmission may be taking place.

BCBOHA will host an information session and training on the evening of March 10, 2020 at the Hillcrest Mansion in the Elms classroom, located at 165 Tor Court, Pittsfield, MA. This event is open to Board of Health Members, First Responders, Emergency Management Directors, and Hospitals and other health care facilities. Topics covered will include a situation report, non-pharmaceutical interventions, and a modified isolation and quarantine training. A flyer and formal announcement will follow.

Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs):

The CDC is recommending personal preparedness and protective measures, including Personal Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs). NPIs are measures taken to help prevent the spread of diseases that do not include medications. Currently, there are no medications or vaccinations available to prevent COVID-19, however, everyone should practice these respiratory illness prevention protocols:

- diligent hand washing with soap and water
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- cover your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- stay home from school, work and other people when you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and a cough
- avoid close contact (within 6 feet) of people who are sick
- <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/personal/index.html>